TL 2252

em **timor-leste**

a paz é possível

Luisa

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES (February - October 1987)

I - INFORMATION

The main point of our activity is still the information, as an essential resource to make wider circles of persons aware of the East Timor issue.

1. Bulletin: We've published four numbers in portuguese and four in french (n. 19 - 22). We gave up the publication in german, because it was very difficult for us to assure the necessary quality and regularity. We have established contact with an Austrian solidarity group wishing to produce a publication in german. However, if the bulletin in german is considered an essential point we can re-analyse again the problem, in a different way this time: having recourse to an entirely remunerated work, as we doesn't deal with people who perfectly knows this language and disposable enough.

   The bulletin's form has been changed since n. 19, and is now composed in a typography. The increased costs of publication are being counterbalanced by the mail's costs (lighter, with the same quantity of information). The bulletin becomes, we hope!, more inviting to read.

2. Press: Several articles published on the major newspapers ('Diário de Notícias', for instance) and on christian publications.

   Some of the actions developed by our group gave place to several articles on the whole of the portuguese press, particularly:

   - the III Christian International Consultation on East Timor, in Geneva;
   - the publication of the "East Timor, a christian reflection";
   - the statement of the Portuguese bishop, D. Manuel Martins, at the U.N. Committee on Decolonization, New York;
   - the participation of José Guterres and a member of our group at the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva.

   We're often contacted by periodists to confirm and frame or comment news.

3. Progress has been achieved in our information's task: we had access to the Radio (news, presentation of the group, interviews) and occasionaly the TV (news).

4. Dossiers on particular subjects were sent to the UNO Sub-Commission of Human Rights:

   - disappearances
   - political prisoners
   - deportees

5. EAST TIMOR NEWS: A news service was launched, since June, in co-operation with CDPM, addressed (not exclusively) to the other solidarity groups and committees

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which, all over the world, are concerned about the problem. (Material produced: 4 Monthly Memo and 7 Subject Memo).

6. We have participated at a "East Timor's week", promoted by the "Christian Movement for Peace" at the Coimbra's University. We were charged to prepare, as well as Msgr. da Costa Lopes (ex-Apostolic Administrator of Dili), the item 'East Timor's Church'.

7. Portuguese bishops and heads of Protestant Churches have been directly informed by us about actions or statements made by other Churches.

8. We've been directly requested from the USA, to supply information about birth control and enforced sterilizations, which based the statements made by the US Catholic Conference and the US senators on this problem.

9. A letter was published, in our bulletin, from a Timorese to an ex-capitain of the Australian resistance,whose father, friend of the ex-capitain, was murdered. The publication of this letter, concerning the murder, brought the Australian capitain to develop actions in his country as the murdered was the only Timorese distinguished as an WWII hero by Australia.

II - ACTIONS WITH CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS

We consider the contacts with the Churches as a priority. After the contact with all the Portuguese parish priests and bishops, December 86, moreover the common initiative with 15 christian organàzations about the case of the four students retained in Jacarta, we've been in relation with some groups more sensitive to the issue.

1. Our participation in the 3rd Christian Consultation on East Timor, in Geneva, and the adoption of the document "East Timor, achristian reflection", has helped the ongoing work with other Portuguese christian groups.

   We've made a Portuguese edition of the "Reflection" document, which we've been divulging.

   As we were requested to organize the 4th Christian International Consultation, in Lisbon, we've had two meetings, till today, with other groups and organazations to prepare the International Consultation. In order to include some other groups in the North of the country, specially concerned about the East Timor problem, a meeting with them took place in the North region, last October.

   Already had we tried before, to develop the relations and network with the christian groups based in the Center North region, by organàzing two private meetings.

2. A dossier has been delivered to Cardinal Casaroli, when he visited Lisbon.

3. The same had been done when Emílio Castro, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, came to Portugal (June 87) and we rose the East Timor issue at a public meeting with him.

4. We've invited the Bishop of Setúbal, President of Pax Christi in Portugal and responsible for the Episcopal Commission of Social Action, to intervene at the U.N.O. Commitee of the 24, where the East Timor decolonization's problem is still being discussed. We prepared his statement with him and contributed to the travel costs.

The bishop's intervention in New York had a great impact on the public opinion and political circles: over 30 articles, news or referencies on the press, besides the Radio and TV.

5. We've been in touch with international christian organizations ('Justice and Peace' Commissions, Pax Christi, Pax Romana,...).

   We profited the participation of a Portuguese delegate at the "Óscar Romero" committees'meeting (Brazil, July 1987) to provide information about the situation in East Timor, and a resolution has been approved.

6. Luisa T. Pereira intervened at the UNO Sub-Committee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of the Minorities (Geneva), on behalf of Pax Romana. We've also supported the intervention of a Timorese refugee at this Sub-Commission and Luisa stayed 15 days in Geneva to inform the members of the Sub-Commission about the East Timor issue and dynamize the whole of the NGO's present at the session. This work allowed the presentation, and voting, of a resolution at the Sub-Commission.

III - ACTIONS DEVELOPED WITH SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONS

1. The lists of disappearances we published, enabled Amnesty International to communicate new cases to the UNO WGEID and to maintain the international attention on the precedent cases.

2. The information we've been gathering about forced birth control were useful, above all, to the actions developed in USA (see I,8).

3. Concrete data we've collected about prisoners, disappearances, deportees and translocated made possible a meeting with ICRC's Asia responsible.

   Knowing the difficulties faced by the ICRC to continue its mission in East Timor, we've drawn its attention to the wrong image which the ICRC transmits when it doesn't mention the difficult conditions imposed by Indonésia.

4. The new special information service created for other organizations interested in the East Timor problem shall improve the relations between those groups and provide them the conditions for a more efficient work. 'A paz é possível em Timor-Leste' has assumed this service with CDPM, and will continue doing it, until the Information Center can do it by itself.

IV - ACTIONS AT POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC LEVEL

1. An unexpected disease prevented us, at last minute, from participating at the UNO Human Rights Commission, in Geneva, February 1987, but we've sent dossiers that helped other interventions, like Pax Christi, Pax Romana and the Portuguese diplomatic mission. The presence of a member of our group, at the 3rd. Christian Consultation, in Geneva, make possible, at that time , some meetings with the ambassador and the staff of the Portuguese diplomatic mission.

2. Contacts and meetings took place with Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with ex-President of the Republic, R. Eanes, and with Parlamentarians of the Special Commission on East Timor.

   An interesting meeting with a high official from the Minister of Foreign Affairs took place just before the Cardinal Casaròli's visit to Portugal (April 1987). Some recent informations about the situation of the Church in East Timor, and the case of Dili seminar's Rector (who, being in Portugal, was prevented from returning to East Timor), were considered very useful, in poste

rior declarations of that official.

3. A letter signed by 20 christian organizations addressed to the Portuguese Prime Minister (by occasion of his visit to the Vatican, October 1987), has been delivered in a contact with the Prime Minister's assistant for the Foreign Affairs.

4- Before the indonesian elections a Memo on this subject was sent to all the ambassies in Lisbon. The Portuguese press mentioned this initiative.

V - ACTIONS NEAR THE REFUGEES

There has been good contacts with the refugees, but this level of our activities still remains the most difficult point because it would require a great disponibility of time, which has no one of us.

We've received many appeals, specially from refugeesin danger of losing their lodging but the problems were very intricate and we couldn't answer efficacly to the refugees'requests.

Our efforts to associate the Timorese refugees to the information work, have obtained some results, however we haven't been able to organize that network in a stable way.

We think that the organization of a serious work on this sector will be possible only if the means for its stability and continuity are granted, for a large period more than one year.

We also consider that such a work should include at least one timorese refugee.

VI - VALUABLE RESULTS IN PORTUGAL

The work developed together with 'Comissão para os Direitos do Povo Maubere' (CDPM) and Timorese movements (Fretilin and UDT) enabled the Portuguese circles to change their level of understanding and sensitivity concerning the East Timor question, as it shows nowadays the general attitude of mass media and political forces on behalf of the East Timor's people.

This change is based on one point : the East Timor's people still refuses the indonesian occupation, today in a more generalised and determinate way than 12 years ago.

These results obtained in Portugal shall difficult, we hope, the dimissory attitude shown by the Portuguese authorities pressed by another Governments. We take note , as an example, of how the Cavaco Silva's Government has been forced to go back (concerning its previous position) in August/September (see East Timor News - Subject Memo n. 7).

In fact, the possible Government's yelding up gave rise to more interventions from the Portuguese representatives at the international fora, where they generally raise the East Timor problem: European Parliament, Europe Council, EEC/ACP meeting,...

VII - NEAR FUTURE

The organization of the 4th Christian International Consultation on East Timor is a major point of our activity for the next months.

Some difficulties on the planning and extension of our work are a consequence of the delay to be ascribed grants for 1986 and 1987.

The work developed by our group since 1982 and the certainty - infortunately - that the East Timor issue shall not be resolved at short date, make us think of the advantages of presenting a budget, next year, and asking grants, for a longer period.

"A PAZ É POSSÍVEL EM TIMOR-LESTE"

November 1987.